

Message Text

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11
ACTION SS-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 3479

EXDIS

FOR ASST SECRETARY SCHAUFLE FROM BOWDLER

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EGEN, BEXP, ETRD, EFIN, SF
SUBJ: PERIMETER DEFENSE PROJECT

REF: STATE 190422

1. CONSULATE GENERAL JOHANNESBURG HAS DEVELOPED THE FOLLOWING
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THE PERIMETER DEFENSE SYSTEM BASED
ON FURTHER DISCUSSIONS WITH W.L. BROWN, AMCIT MARKETING
MANAGER OF FISCHBACH AND MOORE SYSTEM:

A) PERIMETER DEFENSE PROJECT, WHICH SAG DOD INTENDS TO BUILD,
WILL COVER ALL OF S.A.'S NORTHERN LAND BOUNDARY (NAMIBIA IS
EXCLUDED, AT LEAST FROM CONTRACT DISCUSSED WITH FASCHBACH AND
MOORE). SYSTEM WILL BE VIETNAM-TYPE DETECTION AND CONTROL
SYSTEM INCLUDING RADAR NETWORK, ELECTRONIC SENSING DEVICES,
CONTROL CENTERS, AND COMMUNICATIONS WITH GROUND-TO-GROUND AND
GROUND-TO-AIR CAPABILITIES. HELICOPTERS ALSO INCLUDED.

B) DOD OFFICER IN CHARGE OF PROJECT (OR WITH WHOM BROWN'S
TWO-PARTY GROUP HAD PRINCIPAL CONTACT) IS GENERAL ERNEST
PIENAAR IN COMPTROLLER-GENERAL'S OFFICE. CONTACT WAS
BETWEEN PEINAAR AND FRENCH MILITARY ATTACHE IN PRETORIA.

C) TWO-PARTY GROUP OR CONSORTIUM INCLUDED F AND M AND
SODETAG, FRANCH COMPANY OWNED BY THOMPSON-BRANDT.
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CONSORTIUM HAD OPERATED AS SUCH ONCE PREVIOUSLY, WHEN

SAME TWO COMPANIES HAD BID UNSUCCESSFULLY ON TENDER FOR INSTRUMENTATION OF DURBAN-JOHANNESBURG PIPELINE. IN CURRENT CASE OF PERIMETER DEFENSE PROJECT, SODETAG HAD COME TO F AND M AND ASKED IF IT COULD PERFORM "MILITARY WORK" AND, IF SO, SUPPLY MUCH OF FINANCING INVOLVED. BROWN HAS PICTURE THAT DOD HAS SMALL MILITARY BUDGET OF ABOUT RAND 1.3 BILLION, BUT PLANS AND PROJECTS COSTING RAND 2 BILLION. IT IS THEREFORE INTERESTED IN CONTRACTOR FINANCING FOR THIS PROJECT (RAND 250 MILLION) AMONG OTHERS. F AND M IS ALREADY ASSURED IT CAN OBTAIN RAND 100 MILLION FROM CITIBANK AND PROBABLY MORE AT 9 PERCENT FROM SWISS BANKS. DOD WOULD BE EXPECTED TO PAY 50 PERCENT ON DELIVERY AND 20 PERCENT MORE ON COMMISSIONING OF SYSTEM. SODETEG HAS TOLD BROWN IT WOULD LIKE TO SEND SOME OF ITS OFFICIALS, ALONG WITH SAG DOD OFFICERS, TO US NEXT WEEK TO DISCUSS FINANCING.

D) BROWN SAID HE THOUGHT THERE IS COMPETITION FOR CONTRACT, PERHAPS GERMAN AND BRITISH, BUT WAS NOT SURE.

2. AS REFLECTED IN THE EXTRAORDINARY MEASURES BEING TAKEN BY SAG TO ESTABLISH A KILOMETER-WIDE NO-MAN'S LAND ALONG ENTIRE LENGTH OF NAMIBIA-ANGOLA BORDER, SAG'S MAIN CONCERN IN FUTURE DEFENSE PLANNING IS HOW TO PREVENT INFILTRATION FROM UNFRIENDLY STATES ALONG NORTHERN BORDER. PERIMETER DEFENSE PROJECT REPRESENTS CONTINGENCY PLANNING LOOKING TO POSSIBILITY THAT RADICAL REGIME MAY EMERGE IN RHODESIA AND MOZAMBIQUE MAY ALLOW ITS TERRITORY TO BE USED AS STAGING AREA. IN FACE OF GROWING DOMESTIC UNRESTS AMONG BLACK POPULATION, I BELIEVE SAG ATTACHES CONSIDERABLE IMPORTANCE TO A PROJECT DESIGNED TO REDUCE POSSIBILITIES OF INFILTRATORS ADDING TO THEIR DIFFICULTIES.

3. WHILE PROJECT DESIGNED TO DEFENCE AGAINST EXTERNAL INFILTRATION (NOT INTERNAL SECURITY AGAINST NON-WHITE POPULATION) AND ACCORDING TO BROWN NO US EQUIPMENT WOULD BE INVOLVED, AMERICAN COMPANY PARTICIPATION IN THIS SCHEME IN THE FACE OF SOWETO DIFFICULTIES AND LACK OF MEANINGFUL DOMESTIC CHANGE WOULD OPEN US TO SEVERE CRITICISM. IN ABSENCE OF SETTLEMENTS IN RHODESIA AND NAMIBIA AND

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IMPORTANT MOVEMENT ON RACIAL POLICY HERE, I HOPE WAY CAN BE FOUND TO ENCOURAGE FISCHBACH AND MOORE TO STICK TO CIVILIAN PROJECTS AND DECLINE THIS MILITARY VENTURE.

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